

## COLLOQUY

Webster's Dictionary defines colloquy as mutual discourse. Readers are encouraged to submit additions, corrections and comments about earlier articles appearing in Word Ways. Comments received up to a month prior to publication of an issue will appear in that issue.

The November 1968 Word Ways describes two autological (that is, self-descriptive) English-language cardinal numbers: FOUR, which requires 4 letters to spell it out, and FIFTEEN, which requires fifteen dots and dashes in International Morse Code to express it. Albert Wilansky of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania points out (with the aid of Litton's Problematical Recreations No. 11) that TWENTY NINE requires exactly 29 straight-line strokes to write in capital letters. Amazingly, each of these cardinals is the only one possessing its indicated property! (Foreign-language autologs are discussed in the August 1969 and February 1970 issues.)

Pamela H. Brang has added several examples to Ralph G. Beaman's two "Pluralities" articles. Two particularly interesting Lonely Singulars (no plurals in Webster's) are AGE AND AREA CONCEPT and BLOOD AND THUNDER. Two missing Internal Plurals are CLARSACH to CLARSAICH and FALS to FALUS. AESIR at first glance appears to be a Lonely Plural, but a separate entry for AS shows it to be the singular; hence AS to AESIR is an Internal-Final Plural. So also is LAND to LAENDER. A word pluralized by removing two accent marks arises from the entry NA-DENE also NA-DÉNE to NA-DENE. KUDOS goes from a soft S to a hard S when the plural is pronounced; the reverse applies to the singular HAFIZ (hard S) with the plural HAFIS (soft S). Finally, the explicit entry ARCANA appears less than an inch away from its singular ARCANUM. Can any reader find an example still closer? John McClellan of Woodstock, N.Y. notes that French also has Strange Plurals: AIL to AULX.

Darryl Francis has pointed out that the 1913-letter word for Tryptophan Synthetase A which appeared in the February 1968 Word Ways has been printed in full in the 16th (1969) and 17th (1970) British ed-

ition of the well-known Guinness Book of Records. He comments that since the word has now appeared in a widely-circulated book, it must be considered to have entered the English language -- it's too late for Chemical Abstracts to deny its existence. The Newsprints column in the April 5, 1971 Chemical and Engineering News devotes several paragraphs to a description of the article "Megalosesquipedalia" appearing in the February issue of Word Ways.

Mrs. William Mills of Oakland, California has accepted Stefan Burr's challenge in the February 1971 Word Ways to construct a short paragraph having exactly the same pattern of word-lengths as another paragraph taken from a book. Readers are invited to determine which of the following came from a book:

Knotting has been an important adjunct to the everyday life of all people from the earliest days of which we have knowledge. There are still primitive races who fasten their huts, traps, canoes and harness with knotted thongs and withes.

Branding has left us excellent records of one familiar task of the cowboy (very few stockmen used no brand or mark). Requiring skill and brawn, providing glory and danger, range life still unites all cowboys with numeral, letter, and symbol.

An informal and highly unrepresentative sample of 20 people (nearly all had a college or a graduate degree in mathematics, science or engineering) yielded 14 who felt that the first passage came from a book, and 6 who elected the second passage instead. (The correct identification is given in Answers and Solutions.)

Delphi Knoxjaqzonville found 99 different all-vowel trigrams in the Second and Third Editions of Webster's Unabridged, listing her results in the February 1971 issue. An RCA report listing all the different tetragrams in the Second Edition (cited in the November 1969 Word Ways) reveals three overlooked trigrams: AOO, OAO and OUO. Philip Cohen of Fort Myer, Virginia has located words containing two of these: acOUOphonia and endOAOrtitis. Palmer C. Peterson of Lennox, S.D. has located examples for the four all-vowel trigrams missing from the February article: taEEE (Chamber's Dictionary); potassIIIsatate (Foster's Medical Dictionary) or ShIIIm (Walker's Dictionary); hIUU (Oxford English Dictionary -- listed as an obsolete variant of heo); and qUUE (Webster's Unabridged, First Edition). Philip Cohen notes that AOUDAD was misspelled in the trigram list.

Leslie Card of Urbana, Illinois adds a few more six-letter numerical tautonyms, gleaned from a medical dictionary, to his article in the November 1970 Word Ways:

22 Nagele	32 condom	40 mirmol
23 pebeco	34 fomite, Khosan	41 burnol, Koomis
24 abucíl, kallak	36 cornua	43 goutin
26 hemate	38 leukol	45 Lorenz
28 manola	39 bovril	48 pygist

Ralph Beaman has responded to "Multiple Anagrams" in the February issue by discovering three letters that may be permuted into thirteen distinct combinations, producing the apparently impossible V/P of 2.167. In Webster's Third, IST, ITS, SIT and TIS appear as entries. Under the derivation of sty is found the Old English form of STI, and the Gazetteer in Webster's Second gives TSI as a variant of Tze, a Chinese river. This completes the six normal arrangements. However, the Second also lists the contractions IT 'S, IS 'T and 'T IS. The first two of these are given (without the spaces) as IT'S and IS'T in the Third. Despite "My country, 'tis of thee", the Third does not give 'TIS! However, it is in the 1956 Collegiate, without the space. Finally, all these sources have the suffix -IST.

Albert Wilansky points out that BALGE is not the only word in Webster's Unabridged for which no pronunciation is given -- consider YHWH, cited by Ralph Beaman in the May 1970 issue. He also wonders why the words CONDOM and BROUHAHA failed to appear in the Second Edition (even in the Addenda, as late as 1958), or why this edition failed to define HEAD as a bathroom.

The 24th edition of Dorland's Medical Dictionary has yielded a nineteen-letter word beginning and ending with the letter N, completing the sequence in "To The Fair Fluke" in the February 1971 issue. The word is NITROSOSUBSTITUTION, the substitution of the nitroxyl radical for some other radical in a chemical compound. Mary Youngquist suggested the chemicals NITROPHENYLGLYCERIN and NORLEUCYLTRYPTOPHAN which are listed (in variant spellings) in Chemical Sources. She invented the word NONSPIRITUALIZATION, and John McClellan of Woodstock, N.Y. coined a host of words including NEMATOIDCOPROLITIAN (pertaining to fossilized worm dung) and NEODEPOPULARIZATION (the recently-revived art of belittling a popular figure).